

# Texas Water Development Board

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**TO:** Board Members

**THROUGH:** Kevin Patteson, Executive Administrator  
Les Trobman, General Counsel  
Jeff Walker, Deputy Executive Administrator, Water Supply & Infrastructure

**FROM:** Matt Nelson, Director, Water Use, Projections, & Planning

**DATE:** February 17, 2015

**SUBJECT:** Briefing and discussion on the 2017 State Water Plan

## **ACTION REQUESTED**

This is an informational item presenting an overview of development of the 2017 State Water Plan including summary of approval process, format, content, and schedule for the 2017 State Water Plan.

## **BACKGROUND**

Every five years, the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) is required by statute to adopt a final, state water plan which is then submitted to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives, and the House and Senate Natural Resource committees. The 2017 State Water Plan is due January 5, 2017 and will be the fourth state water plan developed through the regional water planning process as mandated by Senate Bill 1(SB1) in 1997.

At the end of each five-year regional water planning cycle, agency staff compiles information from the Board-approved regional water plans and other sources to develop the state water plan, which is then presented to the Board for adoption. In addition to incorporating the regional water plans, the state water plan, as formally adopted by the Board, serves as a guide to state water policy as provided for in Texas Water Code (TWC) §16.051(b); includes legislative recommendations that the Board believes are needed and desirable to facilitate more voluntary water transfers, TWC §16.051(e); and identifies river and stream segments of unique ecological value and sites of unique value for the construction of reservoirs that the Board recommends for protection, TWC §16.051(e).

## **KEY ISSUES**

The regional water planning groups are currently developing the initially prepared plans, which are due May 1, 2015. At that time, the Executive Administrator (EA) will review these draft plans to determine whether statutory and rule requirements have been satisfactorily met and send a corresponding comment letter.

The final adopted 2016 regional water plans are due December 1, 2015. Once the EA reviews each final plan and determines that the regional water plan meets statutory and rule requirements and that there are no interregional conflicts, the plan will be considered for approval by the Board.

The 2017 State Water Plan will be developed on an accelerated delivery schedule. The focus on an early schedule requires that the structure of the adopted 2017 State Water Plan document itself must remain in a simple and low resolution graphic format that, after Board adoption, will be subject to non-substantive changes to visually enhance the document prior to final publication and delivery to Texas Leadership.

Once the draft 2017 State Water Plan is prepared, the Board will be asked to consider releasing it as a draft for public comment after which notice of the intent to adopt the state water plan will be published in the *Texas Register*. A 30-day public notice will also be given for public comment and a public hearing at which additional public comment will be solicited. After the public hearing and Board briefing on comments received on the draft plan and changes made in response to the comments, the Board will be asked to consider adopting the 2017 State Water Plan.

After Board adoption, the 2017 State Water Plan will be graphically enhanced, printed and delivered to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and the House and Senate Natural Resource Committees.

Although the adopted and published water plan document itself is anticipated to be leaner and more concise than previous plans, the actual amount of planning information accessible to the public will be far greater because of the Interactive State Water Plan website. The Interactive State Water Plan maps, tables, and graphics reflect each user's own line of inquiry thereby allowing users to obtain very detailed and specific information of interest; information that was not directly accessible as part of previous Texas' water plans.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2017 STATE WATER PLAN**

### **Format**

The EA proposes that the published 2017 State Water Plan document be very concise, strictly focused on high-level water plan facts and findings and state-level policy with an emphasis on transparency. The EA proposes that delivery of the 2017 State Water Plan will include:

- I. A 2017 State Water Plan adopted by the Board in the form of a single, bound, color document published and distributed in hard copy format to the Texas Leadership.

- II. A 2017 Interactive State Water Plan website that will reflect the new water plan information. To be made available to the public at the same time that the draft 2017 State Water Plan is adopted.
- III. Ancillary “Summary Analyses,” developed and provided subsequent to the adoption of the 2017 State Water Plan to augment the plan and Interactive State Water Plan website. These will consist of PDF documents that provide additional summaries of the planning data, for example, summaries by regional water planning areas.

### Content

The EA proposes the single volume published plan to include at least the following:

- **Executive Summary:** Synopsis of the key findings of the plan.
- **Implementation of HB4:** An overview of the agency’s implementation of House Bill 4 including implementation of the SWIFT program, agency outreach, the HB 4 Stakeholder Committee, and regional and state prioritizations.
- **Policy Recommendations to the Texas Legislature:** Regulatory, administrative, and legislative policy recommendations including recommendations of river and stream segments of unique ecological value and sites of unique value for construction of reservoirs.
- **Drought and Response to Drought:** Summary and analysis of drought information related to the new *Drought Response Information, Activities, and Recommendations* chapters that are required to be included in each regional water plan. Information to constitute the drought response component of the plan is to be used to support the development of the state drought preparedness plan.
- **State water Plan Costs, Financing Needs, and Funding Options:** Report of the cost of implementing recommended water management strategies, infrastructure financing needs reported by sponsors of recommended projects, and TWDB funding programs that will support implementation of the plan.
- **Implementation of 2012 State Water Plan:** Report the implementation of projects in the previous state water plan as reported by regional water planning groups, including the summary of projects funded by TWDB.
- **Regional and State Water Planning:** Describe the regional and state planning roles and process, water planning basics, the state water planning database, and plan transparency including how the published document relates to and is supported by the 2017 Interactive State Water Plan website.
- **Future Population and Water Demands:** Describe the methods used for projecting future population and water demands, including presentation of demands for municipal, manufacturing, irrigation, steam-electric, mining and livestock.
- **Existing Water Supplies:** Summary of water availability and surface and groundwater modelling in Texas and reporting of existing surface water, groundwater, and reuse supplies.

- **Potential Water Supply Shortages:** Report and analyze identified water needs; socioeconomic impacts of not meeting needs; and needs for which no feasible water management strategies were identified.
- **Recommended Water Management Strategies:** Summary and analysis of the recommended management strategies.
- **Plan Impacts on Water, Agricultural and Natural Resources:** Summary of how potential impacts of the plan were identified, quantified, or taken into account in the development of the regional water plans including on water quality.
- Other statutorily required content including: description of methods to address water quality problems related to water supply, to ensure public health, safety and welfare, to further economic growth, to protect agricultural and natural resources; basis for planning, planning history, statutes, rules, regulations, and Texas water supply institutions.

### **Working Schedule**

The proposed schedule below is dependent on final determination of compliance of all final regional water plans with statute and rule, timely entry of, and corrections to, data in the state water planning database by regional water planning groups, timely resolution of any interregional conflicts, and responsiveness by regional water planning groups to correct any remaining critical items.

#### **2015**

- April: Staff to develop initial draft chapters in both a) the rough format (for the purpose of early adoption of the plan) and b) final design format (for publication) for developing the basis for final style and format that will be used in the 2017 State Water Plan.
- June: Board/leadership to provide staff with feedback on draft example chapters and guidance on final content and form.
- June-October: Staff to continue to prepare additional draft chapters for Board/leadership preview; remaining drafts to only be prepared in the rough format.
- December 1<sup>st</sup>: Final adopted regional water plans submitted.
- December-January: Staff review of regional water plans; final data adjustments to regional water plan data or content as required.
- December: Provide Board with full, internal draft of its legislative and policy recommendations.

#### **2016**

- January: Begin taking regional water plans to Board for approval.
- February-March: Staff to lockdown state water planning database from additional entries by regional water planning groups and finalize working draft of 2017 State Water Plan with information from submitted regional water plans.
- April: Board to review draft plan and approve posting notice in *Texas Register* the intent to adopt the 2017 State Water Plan.

- May: 30-day notice period and public comment period followed by public hearing on 2017 State Water Plan.
- June-July: EA to address public comments and Board to consider adopting 2017 State Water Plan.
- August-October: Staff to graphically enhance the document for final publication.
- November: Print and deliver final 2017 State Water Plan publication.

The Executive Administrator has already begun drafting content for the 2017 State Water Plan in accordance with this proposed schedule.

**RECOMMENDATION**

This item does not require any action.

This briefing item has been reviewed by legal counsel and complies with applicable statutes and TWDB rules.

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Les Trobman, General Counsel